

**2008 Upland Bird Population Trends
Southwest Region**

Upland Bird	Trend from last year (2007)	10-Year Trend (1999-2008)	Comments
Pheasant	Down	Down	August roadside survey data suggest a general decline in pheasant abundance in 2008. The region's 25 survey routes averaged 0.44 birds/mi; compared to 0.73 birds/mi in 2007 and lower than the 10-year average of 0.6 birds/mi. While overall pheasant numbers may be down, average brood size was up from 4.4 chicks:hen in 2007 to 5.0 chicks:hen in 2008. Pheasant declines throughout the SW Region are likely a result of habitat loss. Many farms along historic brood routes are being converted to subdivisions. Therefore areas with good pheasant habitat remaining should provide good pheasant hunting in 2008.
Greater Sage-Grouse	Down	Stable	<p>Sage-grouse lek route data suggest declines in grouse numbers in 2007 and 2008 after a decade of increasing numbers (1997-2006). On 6 routes with data for 2006-2008, the total number of males counted in 2008 decreased 32% compared to 2007 and 45% compared to 2006. Sage-grouse production in 2007, based on hunter-harvested wing collections, was the lowest ever recorded in the region (50 juveniles/100 females). Chick production in 2008 appears to be good. Therefore, hunting should be good.</p> <p>Hunting seasons for 2008: Owyhee County south of the Mud Flat Road and WEST of the Bruneau River will be a 23 day season (Sep 20-Oct 12) 2 birds/day 4 in possession. Owyhee County north of the Mud Flat Rd will be a 7-day season (Sep 20-27) 1 bird/day 2 in possession.</p>
Chukar	Down	Down	Extremely poor production in 2007 and a tough winter for chukar adds up to another tough year for chukar hunters. Chukar numbers are down 25% compared to 2007 and 82% compared to the high in 2005. Surveys conducted at Brownlee and Lucky Peak Reservoir indicate low chukar densities relative to the long-term average.
Gray Partridge	Down	Down	No grey partridge were observed along brood routes in 2008. Harvest in 2007 was down 62% compared to 2006. Poor production and low over-winter survival adds up to a tough year for hunters interested in grey partridge.
California Quail	Down	Down	Quail numbers in the region are down compared to previous years. The number of quail observed on August 2008 surveys (2.4 quail/mi) was down compared to 2007 (3.6 quail/mi) and lower than the 10-year average (3.1 birds/mi). Quail harvest in 2005 (145,761 birds) was the highest ever recorded. Harvest in 2006 dropped 32% compared to 2005, and another 11% in 2007. Quail production should be good in 2008 and hunters will likely not see a substantial decline in quail harvest compared to 2007.
Mourning Dove	Down	Up	Late August dove numbers are down (3.7) compared to 2007 (5.2) but slightly higher than the 10-year average of 3.3. Cooler weather in late August 2008 may have resulted in earlier migrations of doves out of the area.
Ruffed Grouse	Stable	Up	Early reports indicate forest grouse numbers are stable. Reports from wings collected at wing barrels in 2008 indicate good chick production. Blue grouse – 3:1 chick to hen, Ruffed Grouse 4:1 chick to hen.
Blue Grouse	Stable	Up	